

Wednesday July 18

My dearest Ruth, We've now had three days of violence that weather - that's just what we don't want. It is very depressing. Just when things looked like moving a bit faster they seem to have stopped. Of course it's possible that much may have happened that we know nothing about. But it looks not well. One wonders how the Hun 3rd line is getting on when he has so much time to prepare it; and one wonders if the whole position is so very favourable - I speak only from what we can all see in the newspapers - a salient has been pushed in as usual, & one knows what that means.

I wish I could let myself discuss these things in full - but I've said enough to indicate why I feel so depressed - & you'll guess I feel the same great hope as everyone else, that the Russians will win the war for us. It's chiefly a question of numbers now & a big victory now might upset Fritz very much. And what is to be the fate of Austria? Yes, the war looks much more prosperous in that part of the world.

I had a good letter from you yesterday & one from Arthur. It appears that Trafford will be going out almost at once. Letters seem to have been coming - for pretty rapidly just lately; I parcels too; I had the parcel of butter by the same mail as your letter says you were sending it. It's very delicious.

At this point I am sent on a mission to town - to the Field Cashier an elusive figure who is not there to-day, but will be there to-morrow. Extraordinary how this place has so far survived - not that it is exactly in good repair now, but the walls of most of the houses and even of the Church are standing though they mostly lack a few bricks; & I remember when we first came through how we prophesied that if one thing were more certain than another, the town of - would be smothered in dust when the battle began.

The sun has come out brightly now & the air is less stuffy; you will infer that I feel less gloomy than when I started this letter - not however so as to go back on anything I said. It seems I have less than usual to communicate to-day - the fact is that all I want to say happens to be about guns or operations. I can't of course tell you what is happening or what is going to happen to us; nor shall I be free in that sense till some little time after things have happened. I'm afraid I have not the slightest interest in military affairs - excepting in so far as they bear upon the end of the war. That thought rather afflicts me sometimes; it would be nice to return with a stock of stores & observations as plenty of men will return - but I shall have none.

Now I've got a further mission about this job - so
Farewell.

Yours lovingly
George